

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

- 1 1. A method for operator selection, comprising:
2 initiating a dialog between a contact and a call handling system;
3 identifying a language variation spoken by the contact;
4 determining a skill level with respect to the language variation for each
5 operator within a set of operators;
6 selecting an operator whose skill level in the language variation is above a
7 predetermined value; and
8 transferring the dialog with the contact to the operator.

- 1 2. The method of claim 1, wherein determining includes:
2 receiving a self rating from an operator regarding how difficult a dialog was
3 with a contact who speaks the language variation; and
4 updating the skill level of the operator using the self-rating.

- 1 3. The method of claim 1, wherein determining includes:
2 defining a set of dialog key words indicating communication difficulties;
3 rating an operator based on how many of the key words the operator spoke in a
4 dialog with a contact who speaks the language variation; and
5 updating the skill level of the operator using the rating.

- 1 4. The method of claim 1, wherein determining includes:
2 measuring a time an operator spent engaged in a dialog with a contact who
3 speaks the language variation;
4 counting a number of words spoken during the dialog with the contact who
5 speaks the language variation;

6 rating the operator based on the time spent and number of words spoken; and
7 updating the skill level of the operator using the rating.

1 5. The method of claim 1, wherein selecting includes:
2 selecting an operator with a highest skill level in the language variation.

1 6. The method of claim 1, wherein selecting includes:
2 queuing the contact with a soon to be available operator with a highest skill
3 level in the language variation.

1 7. The method of claim 1, wherein selecting includes:
2 selecting an operator whose second language is equal to the language variation
3 of the contact.

1 8. The method of claim 1, wherein selecting includes:
2 selecting an operator whose cultural background is associated with the
3 language variation of the contact.

1 9. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
2 generating a report on all language variations spoken by contacts calling the
3 call handling system.

1 10. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
2 generating a report on operator skill levels with respect to a predefined set of
3 language variations.

1 11. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
2 generating a report on disparities between a number of contacts calling the call
3 handling system and speaking a particular language variation and operators skilled in
4 the particular language variation.

1 12. The method of claim 1, wherein initiating includes:
2 initiating dialog between the contact and an interactive voice response
3 interface.

1 13. The method of claim 1, wherein the language variation is an accent
2 variation.

1 14. The method of claim 1, wherein the language variation is a dialect
2 variation.

1 15. The method of claim 1, wherein identifying includes:
2 retrieving the contact's language variation from a contact database.

1 16. The method of claim 1, wherein identifying includes:
2 generating a set of confidence scores indicating a likelihood that the contact
3 speaks each language variation within a set of language variations;
4 generating an inverse distance weighted confidence score for each of the
5 language variations using the confidence score and an inversely weighted distance
6 between the contact and each language variation; and
7 associating a language variation with the contact if that language variation's
8 inverse distance weighted confidence score is above a predetermined value.

1 17. The method of claim 16 wherein generating an inverse distance
2 weighted confidence score includes:
3 selecting a first language variation as a first origin;
4 calculating a distance between the first origin and each other language
5 variation;
6 normalizing these distances with respect to the first origin;
7 multiplying each normalized distance by its respective confidence score to
8 generate a set of multiplied results;
9 totaling the multiplied results to yield an inverse-distance weighted confidence
10 score for the first language variation;
11 selecting a second language variation as a second origin; and
12 repeating the selecting, calculating, normalizing, multiplying, and totaling for
13 the second origin.

1 18. The method of claim 16 wherein associating includes:
2 associating a language variation having a highest variation's inverse distance
3 weighted confidence score with the contact.

1 19. The method of claim 16, wherein the distance is a physical distance.

1 20. The method of claim 16, wherein the distance is a virtual distance.

1 21. A method for operator selection, comprising:
2 initiating a dialog between a contact and a call handling system;

3 generating a set of confidence scores indicating a likelihood that the contact
4 speaks each language variation within a set of language variations;
5 generating an inverse distance weighted confidence score for each of the
6 language variations using the confidence score and an inversely weighted distance
7 between the contact and each language variation;
8 associating a language variation with the contact if that language variation's
9 inverse distance weighted confidence score is above a predetermined value;
10 determining a skill level with respect to the language variation associated with
11 the contact for each operator within a set of operators;
12 selecting an operator whose skill level in the language variation associated
13 with the contact is above a predetermined value; and
14 transferring the dialog with the contact to the operator.

1 22. A computer-usable medium embodying computer program code for
2 performing operator selection, comprising:
3 initiating a dialog between a contact and a call handling system;
4 identifying a language variation spoken by the contact;
5 determining a skill level with respect to the language variation for each
6 operator within a set of operators;
7 selecting an operator whose skill level in the language variation is above a
8 predetermined value; and
9 transferring the dialog with the contact to the operator.

1 23. The medium of claim 22, wherein identifying includes:
2 generating a set of confidence scores indicating a likelihood that the contact
3 speaks each language variation within a set of language variations;

4 generating an inverse distance weighted confidence score for each of the
5 language variations using the confidence score and an inversely weighted distance
6 between the contact and each language variation; and
7 associating a language variation with the contact if that language variation's
8 inverse distance weighted confidence score is above a predetermined value.

1 24. A system for operator selection comprising a:
2 means for initiating a dialog between a contact and a call handling system;
3 means for identifying a language variation spoken by the contact;
4 means for determining a skill level with respect to the language variation for
5 each operator within a set of operators;
6 means for selecting an operator whose skill level in the language variation is
7 above a predetermined value; and
8 means for transferring the dialog with the contact to the operator.